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Snowy Plover Season Changes Access to Olson

North Bend, OR – Visitors to the North Spit of Coos Bay will find slightly different access to the *George L. Olson* shipwreck once western snowy plover nesting season begins March 15.

The current one-way portion of the Foredune Road between the gates and the dry sand portion of the beach will be closed to all access. As in past years, Foredune Road traffic will be detoured towards the bay for a couple of miles until the road reaches the jetty. These areas on the North Spit contain sensitive snowy plover habitat, and public access is restricted to protect plover nests, eggs and chicks during their nesting and brood rearing season. The attached map depicts the restricted access areas.

Visitors can access the *Olson* by foot from the wet sand portions of the beach. The easiest access to the *Olson* is to drive on the Foredune Road and access the wet sand portion of the beach by foot at the FAA tower, or drive to the North Jetty and walk north on the wet sand portion of the beach to the shipwreck. Each of these walking routes is approximately 1.5 miles one way.

“Signs, ropes, and maps on the North Spit will help guide visitors to the shipwreck and around sensitive plover habitat,” said Dennis Turowski, Umpqua Area Manager. “The shipwreck itself will not be within the closure area, so visitors will still be able to walk up to the *Olson*. The access to it will just be a little different.”

Snowy plover nesting season runs until September 15th. The pacific coast population of the western snowy plover was listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened in 1993 due to low population numbers and reduced habitat. The North Spit of Coos Bay continues to be one of the most productive plover nesting sites on the southern Oregon coast.

“Plovers are breeding and surviving on the North Spit in part because of people’s willingness to comply with the access restrictions,” continued Turowski. “The access allows plovers and visitors to share the beach and people will still be able to visit the shipwreck.”

About BLM

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